

At HCG, we offer a high quality, safe, and accessible space for the public to enjoy organic gardening. We ask that all gardeners contribute to a positive experience for themselves and other gardeners. We welcome gardeners of all abilities.

Please honor this simple principle: be a good neighbor. By keeping plots well-tended and contributing time to common area maintenance, we can make and keep HCG a success.

We are happy to give you an orientation. Contact us at CommunityGarden@town.harpswell.me.us to arrange an orientation. HCG hours are the same as those for Mitchell Field: 8 am to sunset.

Plot Maintenance

Please visit your plot each week to weed, water, and harvest. Plots must be kept weed-free throughout the season. Neglected plots quickly lead to weeds going to seed and spreading.

Monitor and control insect pests on your plot. Many insects are beneficial. Pest insects, like weeds, do not respect boundaries. Please see allowed products (page 3), or contact us for help controlling pests.

Living or dead annual crops/flowers, weeds, cages, trellises and other small support items should be removed by October 31st, or two weeks after the first killing frost. Returning gardeners may, with permission, leave perennial plants and larger structures in place between seasons. Seed heads must be removed from perennials at the end of the season.

Harvesting

If you will be away during the season or for other reasons are unable to tend your plot, we suggest you ask a friend or a garden "buddy" to look after it for you, including harvesting.

If you are unable to harvest, please let us know. Volunteers will be happy to glean whatever we can to donate to local food programs, rather than have produce rot.

Forfeiture

If guidelines are not followed or a plot is unused or neglected, the gardener will be asked to correct the problem. We may be able to suggest resources to help maintain plots. Failure to correct a problem could lead to forfeiture of the plot during the current garden season without refund.

Plots & Pathways

Gardeners are responsible to keep pathways around their plots weeded, unobstructed and level. Maintaining the pathways is separate from your volunteer hours. The edges of your plot should measure as close to 10x10' or 10x15' as possible, leaving pathways that are about 36" wide.

Additionally, please be a good neighbor:

- Place any structures (trellises, hoops, fences, supports) at least one foot inside plot edges.
- Do not allow plants to grow into or hang over the pathways.
- Place tall crops on the south side or center of plot to avoid shading neighbor's plots.

Volunteer Hours

Each gardener is asked to give at least six hours' volunteer service, by mowing, turning compost, helping with the Common Good Garden, or taking on a special project or ongoing activity.

HARPSWELL COMMUNITY GARDEN GUIDELINES

We periodically schedule work days, or you may volunteer at other points during the season. A list of volunteer tasks will be publicized. We can help match gardeners' time and talents to garden needs.

Please record your volunteer hours in the log book on the table in the garden shed or by emailing CommunityGarden@town.harpswell.me.us. This data helps us when we apply for grants to fund our operations.

Children and Pets

We welcome and encourage children to participate in the garden community. Please keep a close eye on little ones and don't let them trample on neighboring plots (or take any of the bounty). A sandbox and play structure are available to children who visit with gardeners.

Well-behaved dogs are allowed in the garden, but must be leashed at all times. We prefer that dogs remain in common areas.

Organic Gardening Basics

Non-organic fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides are **not** permitted. Labels must state that the product is 100% organic and approved by OMRI. Please see more details on page 3.

Smoking, vaping etc are not allowed in or near the garden. Tobacco users must clean their hands prior to entering the garden, as tobacco mosaic virus can be carried on people's hands.

Wood that is pressure treated, painted or treated in any way is not permitted in garden plots.

Compost Bins

Do not put any diseased plant matter in the compost or weed pile; bag and remove it for disposal with your home trash. Diseased plants in our compost lead to more disease in future years.

Separate your weeds from other, healthy plants as you work in your plot:

- The compost bin on the far right side is for healthy garden plants/clippings and vegetable/herb scraps only (no meat, milk, fish, or bones).
- All weeds go on the pile to the right of the compost bin, NOT in the compost. Please attempt to get to your weeds before they go to seed.

Water

Non-potable water is supplied from a deep well. Please use water efficiently, watering by hand directly onto the soil at the base of plants.. The storage tanks can empty quickly after use by multiple gardeners. Our water system is solar powered and will not replenish itself on cloudy days.

Please be sure to completely close spigots when finished watering, and catch any final drops into a watering can. Report leaks right away: CommunityGarden@town.harpswell.me.us.

Unless you are trained in our water system, please do not use or adjust any of the faucets associated with our pump and water storage setup. It's a complex system.

Tools and Equipment

Hand tools, wheelbarrows, etc. are stored in the garden shed. If you use any tools, please clean soil and debris off and dry them before storage, to prolong the life of the tools. There is also a small first aid kit.

Each plot holder is given the combination to the shed door. Please lock the door when you leave.

HARPSWELL COMMUNITY GARDEN GUIDELINES

If you will be using the riding lawn mower, you must first sign a waiver at Town Office; be sure to also fill in the lawn mower log (in its own tab in the volunteer log book).

Trash

We are a carry-in, carry-out location. Please carry out everything that cannot be composted, keeping an eye for errant wrappers, seedling pots/trays, etc. As a reminder, check our compost rules.

Organic Garden Products

To maintain the organic integrity of the Harpswell Community Garden, use only organic products.

Acceptable products (note: liquids may ONLY be applied by hand-held trigger spray bottle)

BT, M Track, MVP	PRO GRO fertilizer
Messenger	Diatomaceous earth
NEEM	Serenade
Insecticidal soaps	Spinosad
Pyrethrum	Sulfur
Summer Oil	Wood ash
Seaweed/fish preparations	Manures (non carnivorous)
Garlic, hot pepper, "kitchen" mixes	Rock powders (lime, rock phosphate, greensand, granite dust)

Unacceptable (this list includes the most common products that are not allowed)

Miracle Gro, Miracid, Peters, unless 100% organic formulations	Methoxychlor
5-10-5, 5-10-10 and variations	Pyrethrin
Rotenone	Slug bait with metaldehyde
Sevin	Sabadilla
Diazonin	Copper
Malathion	Chemical formulations

Communications

We mostly communicate via email and check our email most days. Some information is also posted to the town website or our social media accounts.

We encourage gardeners to share their gardening photos on Instagram or Facebook and tag us (@HarpswellCommunityGarden).

Our committee is here to create a thriving garden community and help you have a satisfying experience. If you are interested in joining the committee, please email us!

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Harpswell Community Garden is a Town-sponsored Recreational Program, with funding support from the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust.